1867

Rome Jan^y 15. 1864

My dear Maria

Yours of Mar^h 2 I got yest^y & hasten to assure you that it found me in good flannell from head to foot & better towards have been for me if I had adopted it before – I am really better but very weak & not yet free of my cough all this in double caused by the very bad weather here, Rain not so bad as yours Yes^y I got out for the 1^st time for 12 days & I walked pretty well but my gigantic staircase was almost too much for me

This illness (Bronchites) I had 6 years ago when I first came & it was much worse as I had fever with it, but as it was in the Spring & when I rallied the Doctor sent me down to the sea & I got well at once – This I cannot do now as it will be 2 months before the cold of the journey would be dangerous

I never lose my cheerfulness & altho' I have been a month alone on account of

of my cough, & always dining alone yet I am never dull as I have never to seek for amusement, having so many resources in the many many studies I have always carried on - I was telling Charley that tho' I seemed to learn & study so many useless things in Masons Court, yet now they all come into use & indeed it would almost appear that I had been learning for what I do now

You'll all be amused at the great conflict I am in at this moment - I think I told you that the King of Italy is desirous that I should inhabit the Ambassadors Palace, now the property of the Italian Crown, but which was formerly the residence of the Tuscan minister of the Gran Duke of Florence This Palace has been retained up to the last moment by the Papal party & now they are so enraged at the idea of my going to it that they declare they will

burn it down rather than that I should have possession of it, meanwhile I am waiting the Royal consignment which I am afraid is even suspended by this Papal malice here indeed I dont wish to encounter it, I have almost made up my mind not to go — As yet I have not received Lord Stanleys permission without which I dare not go

You would be astonished what enemies I have owing to the proud position I have gained, but this Palace affair has made openly rabid, — So I'll keep quiet & let it all take its own course

I am fortunate in being able to exercise & take care of myself & what my vocation admits of repose, that is my greatest task is signing documents, which is not very hard, but the thinking part I can defer at times & so I always excell in the most difficult matters, & it is this in which I have gained the high esteem of the King & for which he wishes me to be in the Palace — already the Majesty has entrusted to me all the Church treasures of S. Isidoro, now shut up as the King is excommunicated